Radio Days – 2009-10-24

Tip of the Week – Removing Some of the Worst

Microsoft has a free program, the Malicious Software Removal Tool (MSRT). This is free to download and will get rid of some of the more annoying programs which the web can inflict on your computer. It matters not how any of these programs get onto your computer, the more important thing is to remove them as soon as possible before they do too much damage.

You will notice that this week's website has a funny appearance. This is because I have used a shortened form of a normal email address called a *tinyurl*. tinyurl.com is a website whose sole purpose is to provide a short web address (*url*, or *U*niform *R*esource *L*ocator) which you can use instead of some of the very long ones which you may see in emails.

Tinyurl provides a useful service, and you can use it for no charge. If you have a long url which you want to send in an email, just use tinyurl to shorten it and make it easier for your friends to access the website.

Having a Separate User Account

One of the ways that you can reduce the chance of getting a virus is having, and using, two accounts to log onto your computer. The main account (the one which you use for everyday use) should be a normal user account. The other account is an Administrator account and is only to be used for installing programs.

Most people have their user accounts created as Administrator accounts. This makes so much of their day to day work easier as an Administrator can do everything on the computer: this is what they are designed to do.

If you are logged in as an Administrator then any virus which infects your computer has your computer under its complete control. If a virus gets into your computer then it runs with the authority (or privileges) of the user logged on at the time. A virus which installs itself when you are logged in as an Administrator has Administrator privileges, and can do anything (and I mean *anything*) on your computer.

If, on the other hand, the virus tries to install itself while you are logged on as a normal user it will often have problems installing because most viruses, like most programs, are designed to install and run with Administrator privileges.

Doing all your work in a standard user account limits the amount of damage that a virus can do, and will often save you from the problems which can hit from an infected website. Yes, you will have to logon as the Administrator if you want to install a program or a device like a printer, but the safety will more than compensate as most people do not install programs very often.

How much are you prepared to compromise your computer's safety for a slight increase in ease of use? Please think about it.

Websites

Microsoft MSRT	tinyurl.com/bt4eq
Tinyurl	tinyurl.com